



# BONHOMME RICHARD'S ALMANAC

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**"I have not yet begun to fight!"**



## BASIC ALLOWANCE FOR HOUSING (BAH)

The new calendar year (CY) 2000 BAH rates became effective in January. BAH rates are based on paygrade, geographic location, military housing area (MHA), and dependency status. In certain situations, BAH may be based on the dependent's location.

BAH is designed to accurately reflect housing costs for the areas where members actually live. Neighborhood income screening, including rental information for a civilian equivalent (income-wise) of the military member is also conducted. This new survey technique (annual survey) was designed to eliminate prior situations where members rented inadequate housing in hopes that their BAQ would cover the Out-of-Pocket (OOP) expenses, thereby driving down member-provided housing cost data which in turn drove down BAQ/VHA rates.

Rate protection, often called the "grandfather clause," ensures that members will not have a reduction in their BAH due to new CY BAH rates for their geographic area (assuming BAH rates decrease for their MHA). Members residing in an area where the BAH rates are reduced will be "grandfathered" with the old rate. Rental agreements and leases are signed based on allowances received at the time of the agreement and reducing rates mid-tour would cause a hardship to our members in areas where new rates decrease from the previous year's rates. Additionally, members receiving PCS orders within the same MHA will not have their BAH reduced, even if a new authorized BAH rate has decreased. However, members moving into a new

geographic area (or MHA) will receive the effective BAH rates at the time they move. This could result in neighbors of the same paygrade and dependency status, receiving different BAH rates based on when they moved into that MHA.

There are three separate circumstances that can lead to reduction in the amount of BAH an individual receives. Each involves a change in status that interrupts eligibility for the allowance. First, and most common, a decrease could occur when you PCS to a new MHA location where the cost of housing is less. Second, if reduced in rate or demoted, your BAH will change to the current published rate for the new rate or paygrade. Third, if there's a change in dependency status, BAH will be determined by the new dependency status based on the current published rates.

A \$225 million increase in BAH funding for CY 2000 provides much needed BAH relief in high cost areas. SECDEF QOL initiatives include sufficient funding to reduce the current average of 18.3 percent OOP to 15 percent OOP. SECDEF has also initiated actions and stated intent to seek legislative changes to eliminate OOP expenses entirely by FY 2005.

Pay accounts are maintained by Defense Joint Military Pay System with pay specialists continuously monitoring to ensure rate protection is in place; however, all members should be aware of their BAH entitlements and be vigilant in monitoring their Leave and Earnings Statements (LES).

## NATIONAL / INTERNATIONAL NEWS

### PRESIDENT PUSHES GUN CONTROL

*By New York Times*

Responding to two high-profile shootings, President Clinton said Thursday that he would invite legislative leaders to the White House next week to try to "break the logjam" on gun control legislation. Mr. Clinton sought to capitalize on concern over the shooting death of a 6-year-old girl in Michigan by a classmate, as well as a Pennsylvania man's rampage on Wednesday that killed three people.

### CHINA WARNS OF TALKS SETBACK

*By USA Today*

In a meeting with former president George Bush, Chinese President Jiang Zemin warned of "another setback" in China-U.S. relations if Washington handles "improperly" the sensitive issue of Taiwan. Jiang told Bush that recent U.S. words and actions left him with "serious concerns," the Xinhua News Agency said. Jiang's comments come amid renewed tensions over Taiwan before the island's presidential election March 18. China has said it will attack Taiwan if the island puts off talks on reunification.

### BLUE-CHIP STOCKS MOVED UP AS NASDAQ STOCKS SAGGED DOWN

*By New York Times*

Blue-chip stocks moved higher Thursday while the Nasdaq market sagged as traders await a jobs report that the Federal Reserve will probably consider when mulling more interest-rate increases. "It is certainly nice to see sponsorship of the old-economy stocks," said Arthur Hogan, chief market analyst at Jefferies & Co. "Throwing 29 points off the Nasdaq is like throwing a deck chair off the Titanic. It doesn't really do much. We are going to be on pins and needles going into the employment numbers."

Before the market opens Friday, the Labor Department will release employment data for February, with analysts expecting the jobless rate to remain unchanged at 4 percent. The Dow Jones industrial average ended up 26.99 points, or 0.27 percent, at 10,164.92, led by AT&T, which rose 6 5/16, to 54 1/8. The broader Standard & Poor's 500-stock index edged up 2.57 points, or 0.19 percent, to 1,381.76.

### U.S. ISSUES 'WANTED' POSTER OF MILOSEVIC IN EFFORT TO ARREST

*By The Associated Press*

The State Department said that it was issuing a "wanted" poster of the Yugoslav president, Slobodan Milosevic, and two other men indicted on charges of war crimes.

Officials said the poster was part of an effort to arrest the men and hasten their trial by the international war crimes tribunal in The Hague.

Europe, especially Serbia, will be saturated with copies of the poster, in the hope that publicizing the prospect of up to \$5 million in reward money will result in the men's apprehension. The reward itself has been offered since June.

## BONHOMME RICHARD'S ALMANAC

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## **N ATIONAL / INTERNATIONAL NEWS CON'T**

### **MOZAMBIQUE FLOOD CONTINUES**

*By Mozambique Paper*

Weather forecasters say flood-ravaged Mozambique could face further disaster if a second cyclone, Gloria, hits the country. Floodwater is flowing into Mozambique from neighbouring countries. The water is expected to reach Mozambique at the weekend.

European Union Commissioner for Humanitarian Affairs Poul Nielsen, who has arrived in Mozambique, says he had not anticipated the vast scale of the disaster. He says urgent talks would be held with local authorities on ways of increasing the levels of assistance. Amid the threat of drowning and water-borne diseases, hunger has become the most pressing need. Half-naked people can be seen taking the most desperate chances crossing fast-flowing floodwaters in their search for food. Armed soldiers have been put on standby in case trouble breaks out when free supplies of rice, oil and sugar are distributed to thousands of hungry survivors.

Cyclone Gloria is growing stronger by the minute off the coast of Madagascar and aid efforts have been beefed up. Up to 1 000 American soldiers are to be deployed to help in the rescue missions. The U.S. military will also send desperately needed heavy lifting equipment and transport to help move relief supplies out to the hardest hit areas. South African search and rescue teams are retrieving more than 500 people a day, many of whom have been stranded without food or water for more than a week.

Numerous European countries have thrown their full weight behind the rescue mission in Mozambique including aircraft, boats and troops are arriving in an ever-increasing stream including a large transport aircraft which has taken off from Britain carrying volunteers, boats and supplies.

### **SCHOOLGIRL REMEMBERED FRIDAY**

*By Associated Press*

In a child's scrawl, the spelling not quite right, a poem propped on an easel near 6-year-old Kayla Roland's gold-trimmed white casket Friday remembered the slain first-grader.

Three days after Kayla was shot to death in her elementary school allegedly by a 6-year old classmate, hundreds of tearful mourners bearing flowers cards and stuffed animals paid their respects during a day long visitation Friday. A memorial service was planned Friday night.

Scott Messinger clutched a pink ribbon while holding his 2-year-old son tightly and handing out laminated cards with Kayla's picture. He said he knows Kayla's family. "I'm not sure how they're going to cope with this. I don't know how I would," he said. "They're taking it hard. You're not supposed to lose a little one this way." His eyes welling, Messinger bent down, kissed his son and told him softly, "I love you."

Kayla, in a red dress, lay in an open casket with a small doll of the TV character Barney beneath it. In her hands was a small card with a poem titled "I'm free." A large poster board filed with signatures and messages from students at Kayla's school stood near the casket. "I'm sorry this happened, " said many of the messages.

By midday mourners had brought so many flowers that some had to be placed in another room. Funeral director Donald Lada passed out pink ribbons and said more than 7,000 already had been pinned to lapels and tied to radio antennas.

No charges are expected against the boy who has said the shooting was an accident and the prosecutor, as many in the community, has urged compassion for a child they say was a victim of chaotic upbringing.

## SPORTS

### TRINIDAD'S DEMEANOR HUMBLE

*By Timothy W. Smith*

Felix Trinidad thinks he is the man. He talks as if he is the man. But he remains an enigma. Trinidad (36-0), the World Boxing Council and the International Boxing Federation welterweight champion, will meet David Reid (14-0), the World Boxing Association superwelterweight champion, in a 12-round title bout at Caesars Palace Friday night. The fight matches two undefeated champions in their prime. But the promotion has suffered. Part of the problem lies with the demeanor of Trinidad, 27, which is that of a humble family man. There is nothing wrong with that, but it will never lift him to the matinee-idol status of Oscar De La Hoya. But Trinidad believes that his victory over De La Hoya makes him the superior fighter, an attitude he has carried into negotiations for a rematch. "If he wants to fight, he must come to me and fight on my terms," Trinidad said.



*Captain Keith and Ens. Josh Keline cut the cake in celebration of the 1999 award winners for the Battle Efficiency Competition. (Photo By Scott Adam Webb.)*

### SPREWELL RESCUES N.Y. KNICKS

*By Selena Roberts*

Once again, Latrell Sprewell revealed his ability to slip into the locker room at halftime as an ordinary player and duck out wearing the costume of a comic strip hero. Bounding onto the floor in the third quarter, Sprewell scored 18 points during a mesmerizing 8-minute spurt Thursday night and turned a game the Knicks seemed uninterested in at the start into a 109-94 blowout of the struggling Milwaukee Bucks. Sprewell finished with 32 points and gave the Knicks an emotional lift after their loss in Miami on Monday. With a dramatic nudge by Sprewell, the Knicks, behind by 13 points in the second quarter, went on a 20-7 run in the third quarter. And the team followed his lead. The once-hot Bucks entered the night sliding toward the abyss after losing eight of their last 10 games.

### OTHER NBA SCORES:

|                 |                 |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| Philadelphia 87 | Washington 84   |
| Miami 101       | Seattle 83      |
| Orlando 104     | Charlotte 96    |
| New Jersey 103  | Dallas 102      |
| Houston 102     | Sacramento 99   |
| Minnesota 108   | San Antonio 102 |
| Phoenix 118     | Indiana 87      |

### BLUES WIN AGAIN ON ROAD

*By Associated Press*

Lubos Bartecko scored twice and Pavol Demitra added his 100th career goal Thursday night as the St. Louis Blues beat the Atlanta Thrashers 5-2 to tie a NHL record with their 10th straight road victory. In a match-up between the best and worst teams, the Blues equaled the road mark set by the 1983-84 Buffalo Sabres.

### OTHER NHL SCORES:

|             |            |
|-------------|------------|
| Islanders 5 | Senators 5 |
| Canadiens 5 | Bruins 2   |